

but a specimen I took on the army ranges at Foulness on the 17th of July this year suggests otherwise. On Canvey Island and elsewhere in south-east Essex the brown-tail moth (*Euproctis chryssorrhoea* (Linnaeus)) is kept under control by council workmen. There is no public access to Foulness Island and there this necessary task is not performed. Consequently this pest occurs in unimaginable profusion. In whole areas the blackthorns, hawthorns and roses are literally stripped bare of all their foliage, leaving ugly skeletons festooned with larval webs. In an area where the bushes had been reduced to such a condition in 1981, the larvae had switched to scrub elm in 1982, presumably because the females had found the blackthorns they themselves had helped to defoliate quite unsuitable for oviposition. The blackthorns were beginning to recover but there is little doubt that 1983 will see the brown-tails renewing their assault.

The result is an almost complete absence of other species feeding on these plants. The hawthorn-feeders fare best because there is so much of it that some trees escape. Blackthorn seems to be the favourite foodplant of the brown-tail, and its other associated species, especially the leaf-miners, are absent or excessively rare. For example, of the four *Coleophora* species so common at Benfleet, I have found only *C. anatipennella* (Hübner) very sparingly, this being one which has alternative foodplants. I have never seen *Yponomeuta padella* (Linnaeus) at Foulness, but its close relative, *Y. malinellus* Zeller, abounds on apple-trees surviving from a former orchard. So unless my specimen of *Y. evonymella* had flown in, it is likely to have fed on some foodplant other than blackthorn.

All the Essex specimens of *Y. evonymella* which I have seen — those from Saffron Walden, Foulness and one or two other localities — have a common characteristic: they are undersized like those I fed on damson. What is their foodplant? — A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AF.

**SPHINX LIGUSTRI L. (PRIVET HAWKMOTH): DISAPPEARANCE FROM N. W. KENT.** — It is with regret that I comment on the apparent absence of this fine insect from urban N. W. Kent — the conurbation south of the R. Thames from central London to Dartford. The privet hawk moth used regularly to be seen on fences and telegraph poles, or injured on pavements and roads, while every year the caterpillars notified their presence by their excremental pellets beneath privet hedge, or overhanging lilac or laurustinus (*Viburnum tinus*), and beside waste land under saplings of ash. I last saw privet hawk caterpillars in this area in 1972, and the last visits of the moth to the garden m/v trap at Dartford were 1972 (two) and 1975 (two). Chalmers-Hunt in his *Lepidoptera of Kent Supplement* mentions an apparent decline of the species for the county as whole.

In the above-mentioned work the author suggests that the introduced species of privet, *Ligustrum ovalifolium*, is the most favoured larval pabulum in Kent, and states that he had only one record for the native *L. vulgaris*. However, in N. W. Kent the larvae could be found every year on the latter plant also, e.g. on Dartford

Heath, while where a hedge was composed of both species of privet, no preference for either was apparent. It was noticeable that often the same short stretch of garden hedge had caterpillars year after year. Once, in 1946, I found nine larvae at Dartford on snowberry (*Symphoricarpos*), and wonder if the plant was utilized more frequently than records suggest, for rarely do these bushes conveniently overhang the pavement. Finally, although holly is a well-known larval foodplant in the New Forest, and perhaps elsewhere, I know of no record of *S. ligustri* on this in N. W. Kent, where the plant is used commonly for hedging and as an ornamental shrub. — B. K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Bexley, Kent.

SOME OF THE LESS COMMON SPECIES OF LEPIDOPTERA TAKEN AT BARCALDINE, ARGYLL, IN 1980 and 1981. — The following were among the less common Macrolepidoptera caught by a Robinson M.V. light trap (125 watt) sited at Barcaldine. Argyll (map ref: NM 964414) (on the edge of Barcaldine Forest) and operated almost nightly during the years 1980 and 1981. Critical species were identified by microscopic examination of genitalia. Some of the species listed are common in southern Britain but appear to be rare here and are included for that reason. Numbers of individuals caught in 1980 and 1981 are given in that order.

*Trichiura crataegi* L. (5:13), *Falcaria lacertinaria* L. (5:0), *Ochropacha duplaris* L. (6:2), *Scopula ternata* Schrank (2:0), *Orthonama vittata* Borkhausen (3:1), *Xanthorhoe munitata* Hbn. (2:2), *Eutephria flavicincta* Hbn. (0:1), *E. caesiata* D. & S. (1:0), *Anticlea derivata* D. & S. (0:1), *Lampropteryx suffumata* D. & S. (0:1), *Coenoteophria salicata* Hbn. (7:8), *Cidaria fulvata* Forster (3:0), *Plenyria rubiginata* D. & S. (3:2), *Thera juniperata* L. (1:0), *Colostygia olivata* D. & S. (1:0), *Hydriomena impluviata* D. & S. (0:3), *Perizoma taeniatum* Stephens (13:7), *P. albulata* D. & S. (13:2), *P. flavofasciata* Thunb. (0:1), *P. didymata* L. (0:1), *Carsia sororiata* Hbn. (0:1), *Odezia atrata* L. (1:0) (common by day), *Venusia cambrica* Curtis (26:21), *Trichopteryx polycommata* D. & S. (0:2), *Acasis viretata* Hbn. (0:3) *Abraxas grossulariata* L. (0:1), *A. sylvata* Scop. (10:2), *Semiothisa notata* L. (1:0), *S. liturata* Clerck (0:4), *Plagodis pulveraria* L. (1:1), *Deuteronomus erosaria* D. & S. (2:0), *Selenia lunularia* Hbn. (2:4), *Cleora cinctaria* D. & S. (1:2), *Alcis jubata* Thunb. (62:52), *Cleorodes lichenaria* Hufn. (0:2), *Gnophos obfuscatus* D. & S. (2:1), *Dyscia fagaria* Thunb. (0:2), *Cerura vinula* L. (1:1), *Harpypia furcula* Clerck (0:1), *Pheosia tremula* Clerck (2:3), *Odontotia carmelita* Esper (10:21), *Setina irrorella* L. (0:1), *Diacrisia sannio* L. (2:3), *Spilosoma luteum* Hufn. (3:0), *Nola confusalis* H.-S. (10:12), *Euxoa tritici* L. (2:0), *Standfussiana lucerneae* L. (0:1), *Graphiphora augur* Fabr. (1:0), *Xestia rhomboidea* Esper (0:2), *X. agathina* Duponchel (6:55), *Naenia typicala* L. (5:3), *Eurois occulta* L. (23:36), *Polia bombycina* Hufn. (11:24), *Lacanobia oleracea* L. (1:0), *Hadena confusa* Hufn. (1:0), *Panolis flammea* D. & S. (0:2), *Dasytopia templi* Thunb. (2:5), *Aporophyla lutulenta* D. & S. (0:3), *Lithomoia solidaginis* Hbn. (0:3), *Xylena vetusta* Hbn. (11:14), *Antitype chi* L. (4:6), *Agrochola helvola* L. (1:1), *Parastichtis suspecta* Hbn. (9:0), *Atethmia centrigo* Haw. (0:1) *Omphaloscelis lunosa* Haw. (1:2), *Xanthia citrigo* L. (2:7), *Acrionicta tridens* D. & S. (1:0), *A. menyanthidis* Esper (0:3), *A. euphorbiae* D. & S. (0:1), *Hyppa rectilinea* Esper (2:8), *Apamea exulis* Lefebvre (4:3), *A. ophiogramma* Esper (2:0), *Amphipoea lucens* Freyer (58:732), *A. crinanensis* Burrows (15:61), *A. oculea* L. (0:1), *Celaena haworthii* Curtis (1:4), *Nonagria typhae* Thunb. (0:1), *Hoplodrina alsines* Brahm (0:1), *H. blanda* D. & S. (2:1), *Stilbia anomala* Haw. (10:10), *Eustrotia uncula* Clerck (0:1), *Bena prasimana* L. (1:0), *Autographa bractea* D. & S. (89:115), *Syngrapha interrogationis* L. (5:8), *Schrankia costaestrigalis* Stephens (2:2), *Hypenodes turfosalis* Wocke (2:0).

The following records from this site are also of interest:—